



notes for proposed Collection Development Policy

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To: Christina Markowski <cstjohn@alpenalibrary.org>

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Tina,

Here are my notes on the proposed Collection Development Policy

1. My first question is why this complete overhaul of the policy is happening? We just reviewed and approved this policy less than a year ago. If the goal was simply to separate it from the Reconsideration policy/procedure, why isn't it simply a cut, paste, approve, and adopt process? The current policy is appropriate, well written, and thorough. Additionally, why is the policy being reviewed? We have 28 policies (according to our website), and if we review two monthly, this policy shouldn't be up for review yet.

2. Why was the "Authority" section added? This is redundant because the board's authority is granted by our bylaws and is not included in all of our policies and procedures. This entire section, including the section regarding Act 138 (MCL 397.301-397.304), MCL 722.671-722.684, classifications, and placing in adult section, is inappropriate and unnecessary for this policy. I think it should be removed.

In addition:

The County Libraries Act 138 of 1917 does not give the board the authority to determine if the material meets the established collection development policy. This act allows counties to establish a public library, but it does not grant the board authority to make decisions about the materials in the library. In MCL 397.302 section 4 (Act 138) reads "The board shall be a body corporate and shall be authorized to contract for the leasing, construction, or maintenance of buildings or quarters, including the acquisition of sites, to house the county library service, and to do any other thing necessary for the conducting of the county library service, the cost of the county library service to be a charge against the county library fund." This provides guidance to the county (commissioners) regarding the authorities granted to the board they establish as part of a public library.

3. In the "Responsibility for Selection" section: What are the 'selection policies set forth by the Board of Trustees'? Is this referring to the "Collection Development Policy"? If it refers to the CDP, it should just say that, as this is confusing as it's written. Isn't it generally known that the Library Director operates the library by following Library Policies approved by the board? I'm of the opinion that the original "Responsibility for Selection" in the current policy is more appropriate and should be kept.

4. The "Definitions" section needs some structural work. The last sentence needs to be moved to the sentence before it, and those two sentences should form a standalone paragraph. In the second sentence, 'Statement' and 'Policy' both need to be lowercase.

5. "Goals of Materials Selection" I believe a Collections Development Policy should include the goals of the Library. I suggest adding this section back into the policy. Why was it omitted?

6. In the General criteria for selection: The current policy outlines the criteria succinctly. Why were some items on the criteria omitted? "present and potential relevance to community needs" - removed, "Favorable reviews by critics...." changed to "positive reviews by critics....", "relevance to current trends and events" - removed, "local, state, or regional historical significance" - removed.

My opinion is that the "Selection Criteria" from the current CDP be used and this updated "General criteria for selection" should be deleted.

7. Why is the "content criteria for selection" section wholly removed? This is an important component of Collection Development and I suggest putting it back into the policy

8. "Display" section added. Of the 10 (so far) collection development policies for public libraries I've read, none of them cover this particular area in the collection development policy. Some libraries offer an additional policy "Display Policy" (example, Clinton-Macomb Public Library)

9. Selection Criteria for Minors section. Remove. The Board was not granted authority to determine if materials are "harmful to minors". The wording is vague. Who will determine what is age-appropriate? Overall, it's my understanding that appropriateness must be judged based on the average 17 year old group to which the content is directed, according to the law.

10. Physical Location and Relocation Policy. It is still my opinion that moving materials from the children's section to the adult section is censorship (by creating a barrier to access of materials), which is illegal for a government entity (like a library) to do. In addition, with the updated Library Card Policy, moving a book from the juvenile section to the adult section does, in fact, restrict minors access to materials.

Overall, I think the old policy was appropriate and well written. I support keeping the current policy and do not support this proposed policy.

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